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U.S. Ambassador Praises Dignity Market's Skills Promotion

FREETOWN, SIERRA LEONE – United States Ambassador to Sierra Leone Michael Owen visited the Dignity Market on June 28. The Ambassador toured the center, talked with the artisans, and enjoyed a musical and dance performance.

Ambassador Owen discussed the U.S. Embassy's commitment to support individuals with disabilities and promote their integration into society. The Ambassador praised the determination and perseverance shown by the workers at the Dignity Market. Ambassador Owen also related the many accomplishments of U.S. President Franklin D. Roosevelt, who lived with polio and became one of the most iconic presidents in U.S. history. The tour of the market follows a recent visit Ambassador Owen made to the National Commission for Persons with Disability (NCPD) in Freetown. At that meeting on June 5, Ambassador Owen focused on raising awareness about the work of the commission and the rights provided by the Disability Act.

The Dignity Market gives individuals with disabilities an opportunity to earn a sustainable income and provides a venue to work off the streets. Located at 16 Hennessy Street, Kingtom, Freetown, the Dignity Market currently employs 34 individuals with disabilities. The center leverages the skills and training these individuals have developed to produce a diverse range of products and services including tailoring, metal work, painting, arts, crafts, and wheelchair modifications.

The One Family People organization established the Dignity Market in late 2012 and operates the center on a self-sustainable business model with initial seed capital coming from the Canadian High Commission. One Family People is a non-profit organization working to uphold human rights values and mainstream disability issues into the development agenda of Sierra Leone.

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